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**EDUCATION**

# Christian Florida school tells parents gay and transgender students must 'leave immediately'


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USA TODAY

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A Florida-based Christian school sent out an email informing parents that LGBTQ-identifying students "will be asked to leave the school immediately."

According to the email obtained by NBC News, the top administrator of Grace Christian School in Valrico, Florida, Barry McKeen, sent the email to the families for the kindergarten-grade 12 school on June 6. He later confirmed and doubled down on the policy in an Aug. 18 video on the school's official Facebook page.

The June email read: "We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgender identity/lifestyle, self-identification, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful in the sight of God and the church. Students who are found participating in these lifestyles will be asked to leave the school immediately."

According to the email, the school said students will be "referred to by the gender on their birth certificate."

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The email, titled, "Important School Policy Point of Emphasis. ... Please Read," also emphasized, according to NBC News, a verse from the Bible, Genesis 1:26-28, as a means to condemn "elective sex reassignment, transvestite, transgender, or non-binary gender fluid acts of conduct."

Gender is defined as a social construct, whereas sex is defined as by biological differences, according to the National Institutes of Health. Messages left by USA TODAY for Grace Christian School on Monday morning were not immediately returned.

The school's policies are not new policies, however, the email enforcing them is. Parents were informed through the June email they must sign documents complying with the standards before students may enroll this month. In the August Facebook video, McKeen said: "It is true that a student can not come to our school ... and be transgender or homosexual. This is rooted in scriptures. ...we have had these policies in our school since day number one in the early 1970s."

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